



Kentucky Department of Parks News Release

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kentucky Parks Launch Campground Reservation System in 2006
Reservations Can Be Made on ReserveAmerica.com or by Calling 888-4KYPARK

FRANKFORT, Ky. – People who want to camp at Kentucky's State Parks will be able to phone ahead or log onto the Internet and reserve their favorite site for the first time ever in 2006.

In the past, camping sites at Kentucky's parks were assigned strictly on a "first-come, first served" basis. While this policy worked, it undoubtedly deterred out-of-town campers from visiting one of the parks' 32 campgrounds. After all, why would anyone want to risk driving their large RV for several hours or days across the state or country only to be denied a campsite when they arrive?

It just wasn't worth the risk, regardless of the beauty of the destination, particularly when you could always drive to another state -- or even another campground in Kentucky -- with no such concerns.

Those frustrations are now a thing of the past. Camping enthusiasts can travel to Kentucky's parks not only with a guaranteed spot, but armed with all sorts of other information through ReserveAmerica.

"We want to be sensitive to our traditional supporters while opening our parks to new markets," said John Kington, the parks' Deputy Commissioner. "To do that, it's clear we need to make some changes. We've had more calls and emails about campground reservations than any other issue."

"It's going to take some getting used to at first, particularly for our long-time campers," he added. "They will have to learn some new business procedures. They won't be able to just jump in the car and go. They will have to plan ahead. That will require an extra step, but I think the benefits will far outweigh any inconvenience." For example, visitors can review all of Kentucky's more than 2,700 camping sites by features such as proximity to water, woods, restrooms, utilities, etc. Guests also can search for ADA accessible spaces, choose sites that are close together or find spots to accommodate oversized equipment.

To provide these kinds of details, parks officials throughout the state inventoried every campsite, up to and including literally measuring the dimensions. Experts with ReserveAmerica.com digitalized the information. The result is the best-ever database ever of Kentucky's available locations.

"The implementation team has really done a terrific job," said Dan Maenza, the parks director of customer service. "We were told that we've been able to pull this in record time for a project like this."

Guests can access this database, beginning sometime in February, by visiting www.reserveamerica.com or by calling 1-888-4KYPARK.

ReserveAmerica processed America's first online camping reservation in September 1997. Today, the company has more than 8 million consumers who utilize its one-stop recreation reservation service each year. It has processed more than 25 million reservations for state and federal agencies.

The Kentucky State Park System is composed of 52 state parks plus an interstate park shared with Virginia. The Department of Parks, an agency of the Commerce Cabinet, operates 17 resort parks with lodges -- more than any other state. Each year, Kentucky parks draw 7 million visitors and contribute

\$317 million to the economy. For more information on Kentucky parks, visit our Web site at <http://www.parks.ky.gov>

